

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES
ELEMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT AND
FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

Prepared for the
April 19, 2015 meeting of the Zoning Board

RECOMMENDATION:

That the board consider an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan effectively accomplishing the following items:

- Striking the Administrative Procedures Element and placing a majority of this content into the supporting documentation of the Revised Comprehensive Plan;
- Striking the Economic Development Element in its entirety due to outdated supporting documentation. It is anticipated that this Element will be replaced by the County's economic development planning effort that is planned for the near future.
- Substantial revision of the Future Land Use Element Goals, Objectives and Policies including but not limited to:
 - Increasing the allowable residential densities within the Agriculture Future Land Use Map category to create consistency with the adopted Official Zoning Map;
 - Substantially revising the Future Land Use Map Series to relocate certain maps to the Plan's supporting documentation;
 - Removing affordable/workforce housing density bonuses; and
 - Creating the Planning Area framework and adopting associated policies related to amendment of the Future Land Use Map.
- Updated Comprehensive Plan supporting documentation including and updated Introduction and Future Land Use Element data and analysis sections.

BACKGROUND:

Statutory Changes

In 2011, the Florida Legislature made significant changes to the comprehensive planning requirements in Florida. These changes included repealing Rules 9J-5 and 9J-11.1023 of the Florida Administrative Code. These changes removed a substantial amount of the specificity previously required to be included in local government comprehensive plans. Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes was also amended substantially to serve as the guidance on what should and should not be included in local government comprehensive plans. These changes provided an opportunity for Santa Rosa County to develop a revised Comprehensive Plan that, while still meeting state level planning requirements, is more locally relevant.

Effective June 2, 2011, local governments also now have more discretion in determining whether or not they need to update their local comprehensive plan. As such, local governments no longer need to submit Evaluation and Appraisal Reports (EARs) to the reviewing State agencies for a sufficiency determination under a prescribed schedule. Instead, it's left to the County's discretion to determine whether or not the Comprehensive Plan needs to be amended to reflect changes in State requirements every seven years. Once this determination is made, the County is responsible for notifying the State land planning agency (the Department of Economic Opportunity) and preparing and transmitting any proposed amendments for review, if necessary.

Santa Rosa County is required to make this determination by December of 2016. In preparation for this, a major update to the Plan is intended to be accomplished towards the end of 2015 and due to the substantive nature of these amendments, Santa Rosa County will be requesting an

early EAR review. The schedule of public hearings for the updated Comprehensive Plan follows (Attachment A).

Rural Development Policy History

In 2003, the County's EAR based amendments proposed a similar scenario for rural development to the one that is included in these proposed amendment. At that time the then Department of Community Affairs objected based on the lack of demonstrated need for the additional allowable residential development and the encouragement of sprawl. Sprawl is basically defined as development that occurs without demonstrated ability to finance the required infrastructure like roads. In response to this objection, the County adopted the current ratio based density policy. At that time, a policy was also added to the Comprehensive Plan that called for the creation of a Rural Development Plan.

Rural Development Plan

The 2003 update of the Santa Rosa County Comprehensive Plan called for the development of a Rural Development Plan designed to protect the rural character, agricultural viability, and natural resources of Northern Santa Rosa County. This Plan was completed in 2005 and it contained a number of recommendations. The following summarizes these recommendations and provides information on the status of implementation

Key Land Use Recommendation 1: Creation of a Rural Protection Zone (RPZ) within which the creation of new communities will be allowed, but urban sprawl will be avoided and development performance standards will be revised to better reflect the rural character of the area. The Rural Protection Zone concept was intended to help give definite boundaries to the truly rural areas of the County as well as to help in implementation of the Rural Development Plan's recommendations. It was recommended that this RPZ should be an "overlay" on the County's Official Zoning Map as was drawn using the boundary line for Impact Fee Area 1 (Rural).

Key Recommendation 2: Creation of a Transition Zone adjacent to the RPZ within which rezonings will be allowed to facilitate a smooth transition from the urbanized areas to the rural areas. The Plan also recommended that the area within one mile to the south of the RPZ should be considered a "transition zone", where rezonings will be allowed to facilitate a smooth transition from the urbanized areas to the rural areas.

Key Land Use Recommendation 3: Creation of three new zoning districts for the RPZ (Rural Activity Centers, Crossroad Communities, and Agriculture Estate).

STAFF ANALYSIS:

General Changes Explained

The Comprehensive Plan update authorized by the Board of County Commissioners in May of 2013 was undertaken in order to accomplish several major goals. The major goals of the Comprehensive Plan update include the following:

- Ensuring consistency with substantially revised Statutory comprehensive planning requirements;
- Reorganization of the Plan's goals, objectives and policies to ensure that objectives are reflective of desirable long terms results, that objectives reflect a related measureable and specific result and that policies tell us specifically how to achieve that related objective;
- Elimination of duplicative or outdated objectives and policies;
- Making the Comprehensive Plan a more locally centered, meaningful and relevant Plan for Santa Rosa County;
- Incorporating some local small area planning efforts such as the Rural Development Plan and the South Santa Rosa Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan; and
- Including the planning area concept which recognizes the different levels of service provision and the different planning needs of these various areas of the County.

Substantive Change Explained – Rural Development Policy

Existing Rural Development Policy

Currently, the Comprehensive Plan limits development within the Agriculture category to and average density within the category of 1 dwelling unit per 8.5 acres. Policy 3.1.A.8 further specifies that this average density is to be accomplished with 90% of the developable land within the category developing at a density of 1 dwelling unit per 50 acres and 10% of the developable land within the category developing at a density of 1 dwelling unit per acre of land.

However, the implementing zoning districts and their associated maximum densities are, and always have been, inconsistent with this Policy. The current zoning designations allow for substantially more residential development than does the Comprehensive Plan. This is an implementation inconsistency that must be addressed in order for our Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code to be compliant with section 163.3201, F.S. that requires the County's Land Development Code be based on, be related to, and be a means of implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Currently, there are two implementing zoning districts - the Agriculture District (AG) which has a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per acre and Agriculture District -2 (AG-2) which has a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 15 acres. Currently the AG and AG-2 Zoning Districts permit a total of 167,400 units. The current development rights in the AG FLUM Category per existing Comprehensive Plan Policy 3.1.A.8 only allow for 39,833 units (90% at 1 du/50 and 10% at 1du/acre). Existing residential development units in both AG and AG-2 Zoning districts consists of is 4,085 residential units for an actual as built density of 1 du per 60 acres in the AG FLUM category which is meeting the 90/10 ratio requirement today.

Proposed Rural Development Policy

The proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Element, specifically revised Policy 3.1.A.6, include the creation of two new Future Land Use Map (FLUM) categories similar to the AG and AG-2 Zoning Districts. This change would result in an effective increase in allowable residential development of 124,578 residential units, but would create consistency between the adopted

Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code. Should this scenario be adopted, the maximum residential yield would be as provided in the following table, assuming full build out:

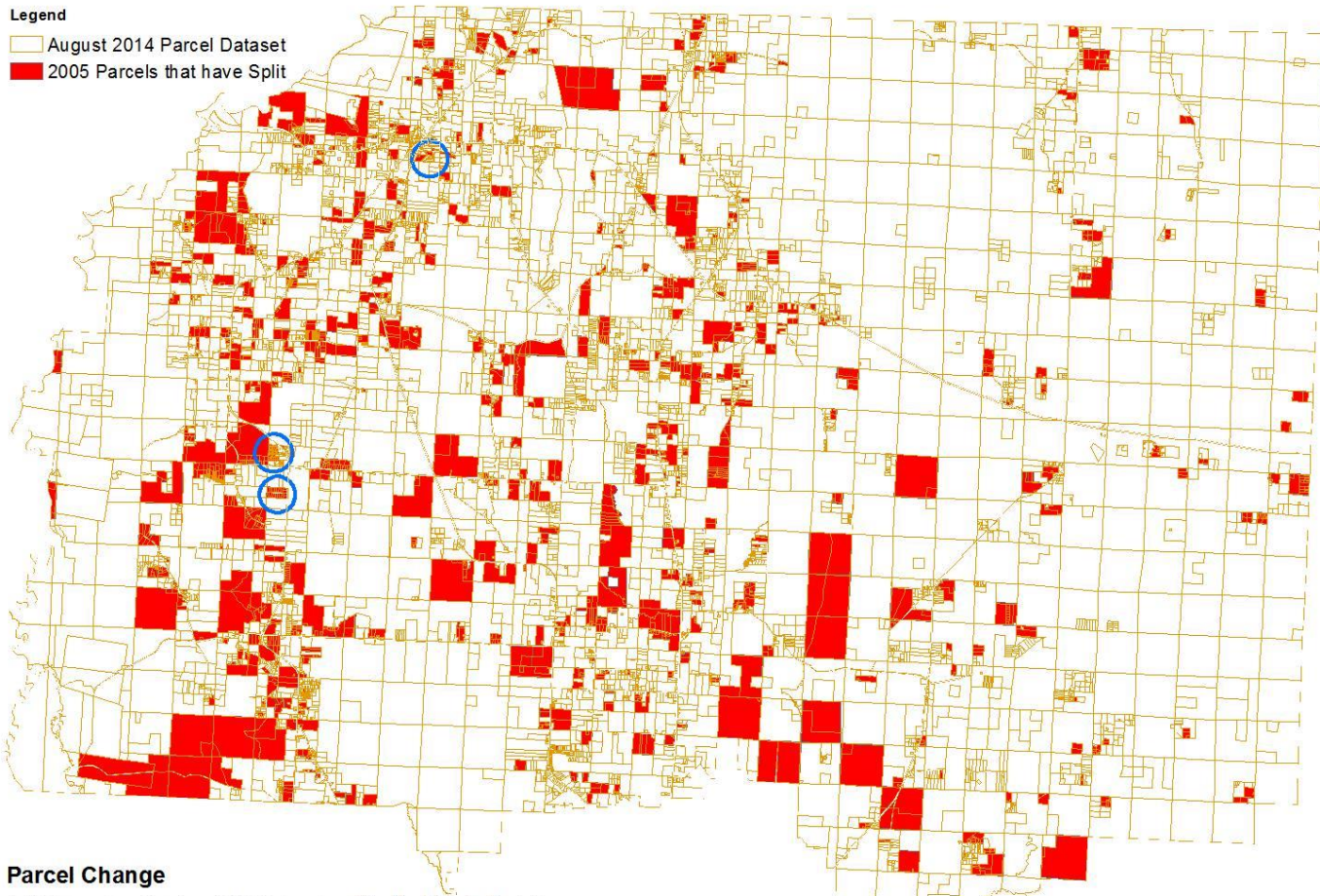
Zoning District	Existing Acres	Existing Residential Units	Maximum Build Out Allowable Units
AG (1 du per acre)	166,942	4,070	162,872
AG-2 (1 du per 15 acres)	77,152	604	4,539
Totals Units:			164,411

The figure below shows new parcels created between 2005 and 2014 in the rural north planning area (the area north of the Pace sewer franchise area and north of where water and sewer services are also available from the City of Milton and the Point Baker Water System). During that time frame approximately 1,113 new parcels have been created. These parcels were created predominantly outside of the platting process, with only 3 new platted subdivisions containing 72 new lots being created during that time period.

Parcel Breakout Comparison 2005 vs 2014

Legend

- August 2014 Parcel Dataset
- 2005 Parcels that have Split



Parcel Change

8,619 Parcels - October 2005 Dataset
9,731 Parcels - August 2014 Dataset
1,113 Parcels - Difference
569 Parcels That Have Splits

Platted Subdivisions

72 Lots in 3 Platted Subdivisions
1970 - 9 Lots
5255 - 44 Lots
6200 - 19 Lots

 = Location of Subdivisions

Planning Area Concept and Rural Development Plan Implementation

The recommendations of the Rural Development Plan have been implemented, in part, on the proposed 2015 FLUM.

The RPZ line as shown in the adopted Rural Development Plan was not proposed for implementation due to potential issues with enforcement, i.e. there being no basis of review for parcels on either side of the line. Alternatively, Plan policy was crafted to indicate that amendments occurring within the Rural North Planning Area will be carefully reviewed per the intent of the Rural Development Plan, specifically to limit urban sprawl and protect the rural character of the area. It should also be noted that other Comprehensive Plan provisions including, but not limited to, those found in the Future Land Use Element, the Conservation Element, and the Infrastructure Element are also considered when determining whether or not a proposed amendment to the Future Land Use Map is consistent with the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Policy has also been included guiding development towards the areas south of this line indicating the ripeness for conversion of Ag lands within the Pace urbanizing area.

Further the proposed Future Land Use Map created several new Rural Community Overlay Districts. Associated policy was also drafted and included within the Future Land Use Element that allows limited commercial land uses within the Agriculture and Agriculture Estate Residential Future Land Use Map Categories. Ancillary commercial development could be accomplished within these overlays through a rezoning process utilizing existing zoning districts, the conditional use and special exception processes.